



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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LONDON MAN CHARGED WITH INTERFERENCE WITH A FLIGHT CREW

United States Attorney Paul I. Perez today announced that a federal grand jury in Orlando, Florida, returned a one count indictment against Victor William Mardell, age 57, of London, England, charging him with interference with a flight crew. Mardell was previously released on an unsecured appearance bond with a condition that he remain in a community corrections center, commonly called a "half-way house," in Orlando, pending disposition of the charges.

According to a criminal complaint filed in the case on August 17, 2002, Mardell was one of approximately 300 passengers on Air 2000 flight O56C which departed from Manchester, England on August 16, 2002, with an intermediate stop in Belfast, Ireland, arriving at the Orlando Sanford International Airport, Sanford, Florida, later that same day. The complaint alleges that Mardell had brought his own whiskey on board the aircraft, which he consumed during the flight. The complaint further alleges that when the plane was preparing to land, Mardell became belligerent, threatened to kill a passenger, and attempted to open one of the doors to the aircraft while the airplane was still in flight and after the plane landed, assaulted two flight attendants.

If convicted, Mardell faces a maximum sentence of 20 years' imprisonment and a fine of up to \$250,000.

The case was investigated by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Sanford Police Department and will be prosecuted by Thomas W. Turner, Senior Litigation Counsel.